

How Do I Earn Commercial License Certification?

Persons wishing to obtain either level of commercial applicator certification must pass two or more written, closed book examinations with exception of pet groomers and antifouling boat paints applicators who must pass one test only. The Core Exam covers general pesticide information. Each Category Exam tests knowledge of pest management practices pertinent to the specific profession where pesticides are used, such as in forestry, lawn care services or structural pest control.

Master-level applicants must complete successfully a test on pesticide regulations and pass an oral examination conducted by the **BPC** staff.

Tests must be scheduled by submitting to the **BPC** a completed application form and a \$10 fee for *each* core category or subcategory exam requested. Applications are available from the **BPC**. Exams are held at **BPC** offices in Augusta or in Presque Isle by special arrangement. Self-help study materials are available through the UMCE Pest Management Office, 491 College Avenue, Orono, Maine 04473; telephone 1-207-581-3880 or 1-800-287-0279.

A commercial certification is valid for five years; however, the commercial license must be renewed annually. So that applicators remain current in the latest technologies and regulations while they are certified, the **BPC** requires license holders to attend continuing education courses. The number of credits needed for recertification varies according to the license level. As with recertification for private license holders, commercial applicators participate in training sessions made available through the **BPC**, UMCE, industry and trade organizations both in Maine and out of state.

Why Bother to Earn a License?

There are many sound reasons for having a license when using pesticides in any situation described in this brochure.

For one, *it is the law!*

For another, a license represents the level of knowledge needed to use pesticides in a manner that is responsible and effective. Recertification credits further that competency, enabling the applicator to make the best pest control decisions based on the latest technology. Certification also adds up to credibility that earns respect of fellow applicators and a positive image in the eyes of the general public.

On the other hand, unlicensed applicators invite a host of dangers to themselves, to their families and communities, and to the environment for which there is neither ethical nor legal defense.

If pesticides are important to your profession, an applicator license is an important part of showing that you are, indeed, a *professional*.

For more information, contact:

Board of Pesticides Control
Maine Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources
State House Station 28, Deering Building
Augusta, Maine 04333-0028

Telephone: (207) 287-2731
e-mail: afgfish@state.me.us

Licensing Requirements for Pesticide Applicators in the State of Maine

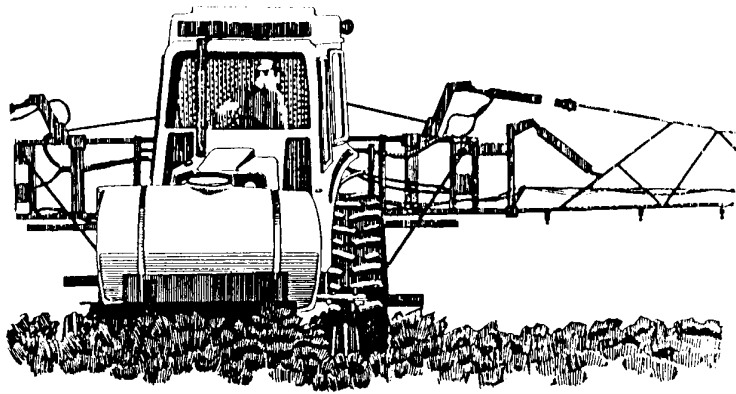


Pesticides are important tools which, in the hands of the skilled applicator, offer numerous benefits. Increased crop yields, safer highways, enhanced landscapes and infestation-free structures name just a few. As with any powerful tool, proper and effective use of pesticides depends upon the judgement of the trained applicator...especially when considering chemicals which could potentially affect public health or natural resources.

The pesticide applicator *license* represents recognition of an individual's qualifications to use pesticides properly.

In order to become licensed in Maine, individuals must first earn certification, a credential which shows proficiency in pest management, pesticide use and safety. This competence is demonstrated through successful completion of examinations offered by the **Board of Pesticides Control (BPC)**. This state agency then issues licenses to certified individuals once fees and, if needed, insurance requirements are met.

But how do I know if I need a license?
How do I obtain a license?



Do I Need a License?

The need for a pesticide applicator license depends upon the type of pesticide intended for use and the circumstances in which a pesticide will be applied.

The term *pesticide* covers a wide range of products. By definition, a pesticide is any naturally or synthetically derived substance used to kill, control or repel undesired insects, weeds fungi, bacteria, rodents or other organisms. Consequently, these substances may include *insecticides* or *bug sprays*; *herbicides*, including *weed killers* and ‘*weed & feed*’ products; *fungicides* or *disease controls*, *rodenticides*; *defoliants*; *growth regulators*; and *disinfectants*.

The **BPC** classifies all pesticides into three categories: *general use pesticides*, products available to the general public but requiring a license for some applications; *restricted use pesticides*, chemicals for use and application only by licensed individuals; and *limited use pesticides*, products for use only by licensed applicators with a special **BPC** permit.

The purpose for using a pesticide determines the type of license required. In Maine, pesticide licenses fall under two major categories: *private*, for pesticide use in agriculture or the production of other commodities; and *commercial*, for any individual who uses any pesticide in public places (such as golf courses, campgrounds, apartment houses, hospitals and nursing homes) on a “for-hire” basis (for services such as lawn care or pet grooming) or as a government employee. The **BPC** defines two levels of commercial license: *operator* and *master*.

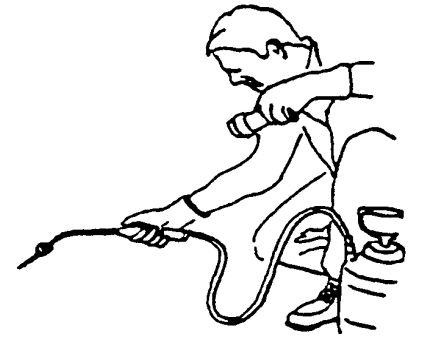
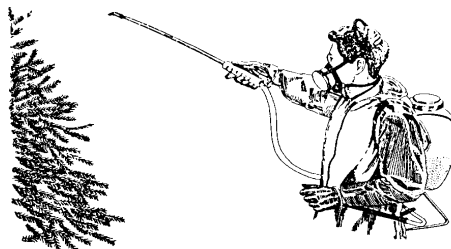
When Do I Need a Private Applicator License?

A private license is necessary for anyone who wishes to purchase, apply or supervise application of a restricted or limited use pesticide with the intent of producing a commodity. These pesticides may be used only on property owned, leased or rented by the licensee or licensee’s employer. Typical private license holders include farmers, greenhouse operators, florists, orchardists, Christmas tree growers and foresters.

To obtain a private license, the candidate must pass two written, closed book examinations. The first, called a Core Exam, covers general pesticide information. A second Commodity Exam measures knowledge of pest management practices for a given crop or crop family. Once exams are passed, the candidate is certified for three years and is eligible for a license. Licenses are obtained by submitting an application form and \$15 to the **BPC**.

Private exams are offered through county offices of the University of Maine Cooperative Extension (UMCE). Applicants should call the **BPC**, telephone 1-207-287-2731, to confirm licensing needs and testing locations. The **BPC** strongly urges use of self-help study materials available for purchase through UMCE’s Pest Management Office, 491 College Ave., Orono, Maine 04473; telephone 1-207-581-3880 or 1-800-287-0279.

Pesticide use is a rapidly changing technology. New products, application methods, safety standards and regulations are introduced every year. To update applicators regularly, the **BPC** requires six hours of approved continuing education training in order to renew the private license. The **BPC** assigns and records credit for attending courses offered by itself, UMCE, industry and trade organizations. Credit is also accepted for attending out-of-state sessions.



When Do I Need a Commercial License?

A commercial license is required for any one of the following situations:

- Application of *any* restricted/limited use pesticide for purposes other than producing an agricultural commodity;
- Use of *any* pesticide as a service for which compensation is received (examples include lawn care, pet grooming, tree & shrub care and pest control);
- Use of *any* pesticide in connection with duties as an official or employee of federal, state or local government, including municipal agencies, schools, and universities; and
- Use of *any* pesticide on non-agricultural sites *open to public use*. Property is considered open to use by the public when the owner permits routine access by the public, even if a fee is charged for such use. Examples range from office and apartment buildings to golf courses and other outdoor recreation facilities.

The commercial applicator/operator certification is the minimum license requirement for individuals employed as technicians under supervision of a licensed master applicator. The operator’s license is in effect only if the employing company or organization has at least one licensed master applicator.

The commercial applicator/master certification is required for one individual within each company, organization or agency. This license is generally intended for the owner, supervisor or manager as long as it is the person responsible for major pest control decisions, for establishing policies related to proper pesticide use, and for employee training and overall work practices.